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# United States Patent [19]

**Alyanakian et al.**

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[54] **LOCKING SLIDE LATCH**

[75] Inventors: **Robert D. Alyanakian**, West Chester, Pa.; **Richard E. Schlack**, Rising Sun, Md.

[73] Assignee: **Southco, Inc.**, Concordville, Pa.

[ * ] Notice: This patent is subject to a terminal disclaimer.

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[51] **Int. Cl.**[6] ..... **E05C 1/00**

[52] **U.S. Cl.** ..... **292/175**; 292/DIG. 31; 292/DIG. 63; 292/DIG. 38; 292/153; 70/DIG. 67; 70/144; 70/488

[58] **Field of Search** ..... 292/153, 170, 292/169, 169.14, 169.18, 169.19, DIG. 38, DIG. 62, DIG. 63, DIG. 31; 70/208, 210, DIG. 67, DIG. 80, 144, 488

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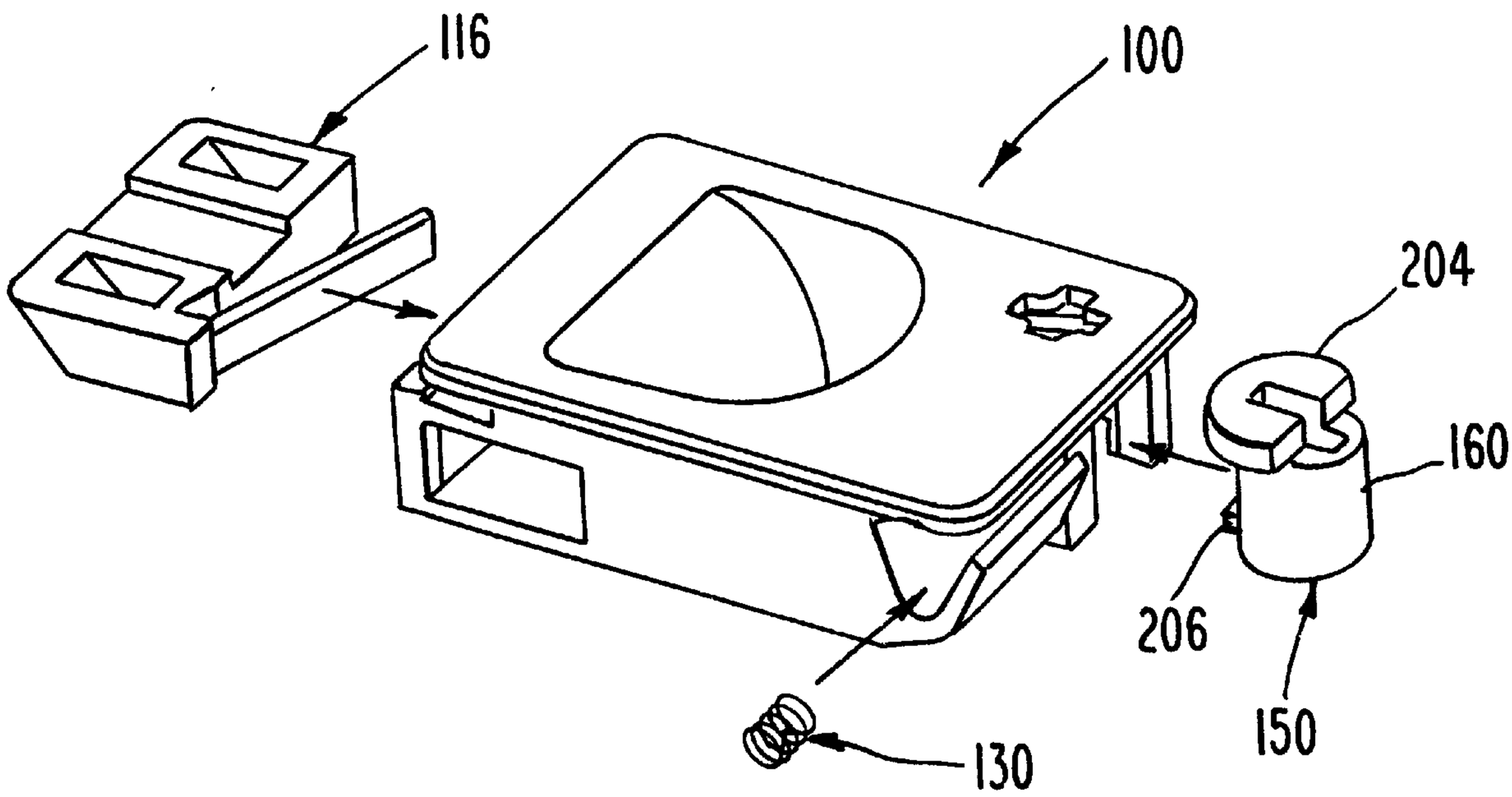
*Primary Examiner*—Darnell M. Boucher
*Attorney, Agent, or Firm*—Paul & Paul

[57] **ABSTRACT**

A locking slide latch comprises components that are easily assembled without the need for separate fasteners or adhesives. A preferred latch comprises a gripable base member having a spring member mounted thereon, a locking member rotatably mounted on the spring member and a rotatable lock plug mounted in the spring member and contacting the locking member. These components are assembled together without the use of separate fasteners or adhesives, thereby simplifying assembly and allowing for interchangeability of parts to meet varying latch requirements. The latches are preferably manufactured from corrosion resistant materials such as plastics, composites and corrosion resistant metals, and are highly suitable for use in automotive, recreational vehicle and marine applications.

**23 Claims, 6 Drawing Sheets**



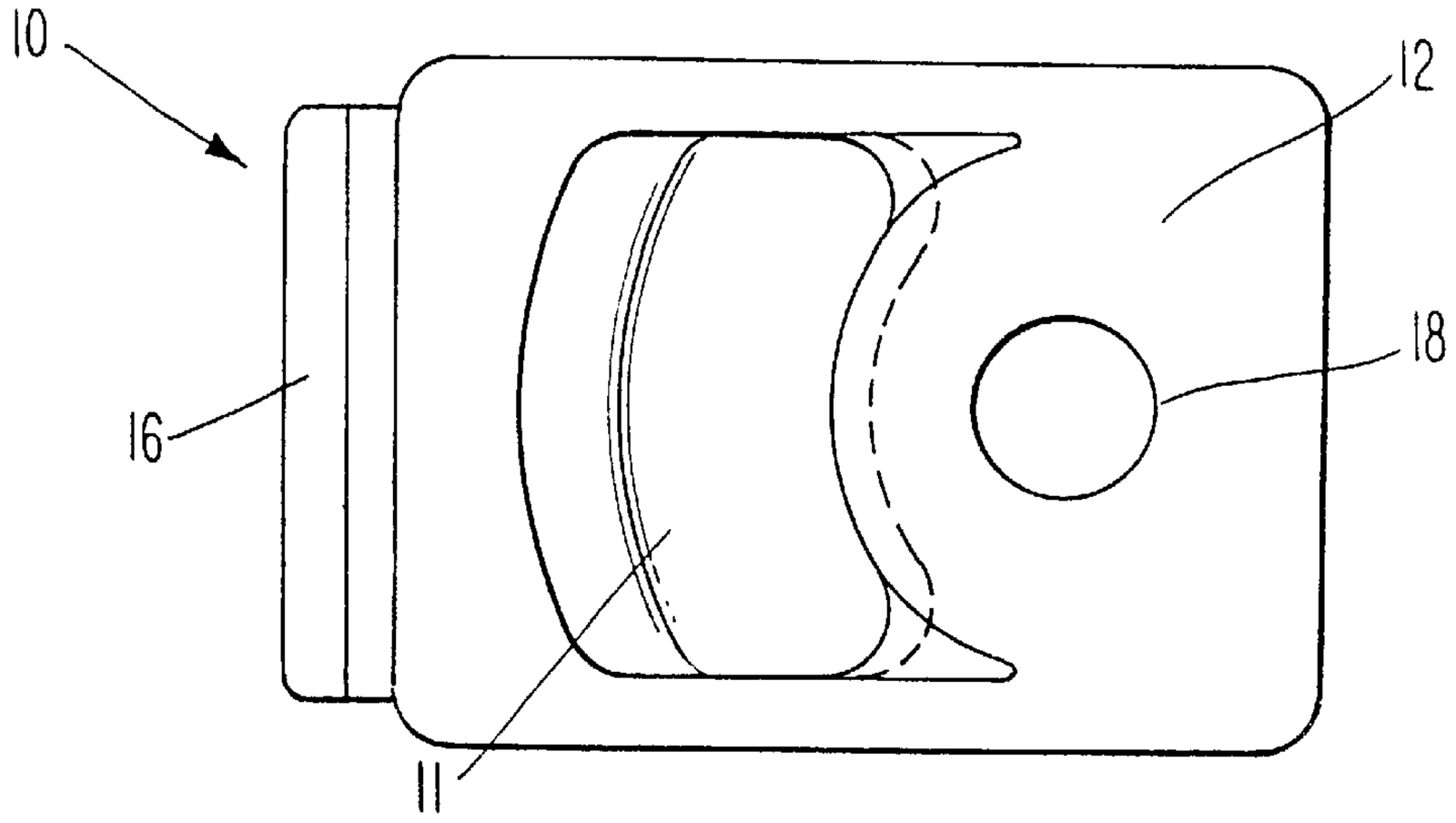



Fig. 1

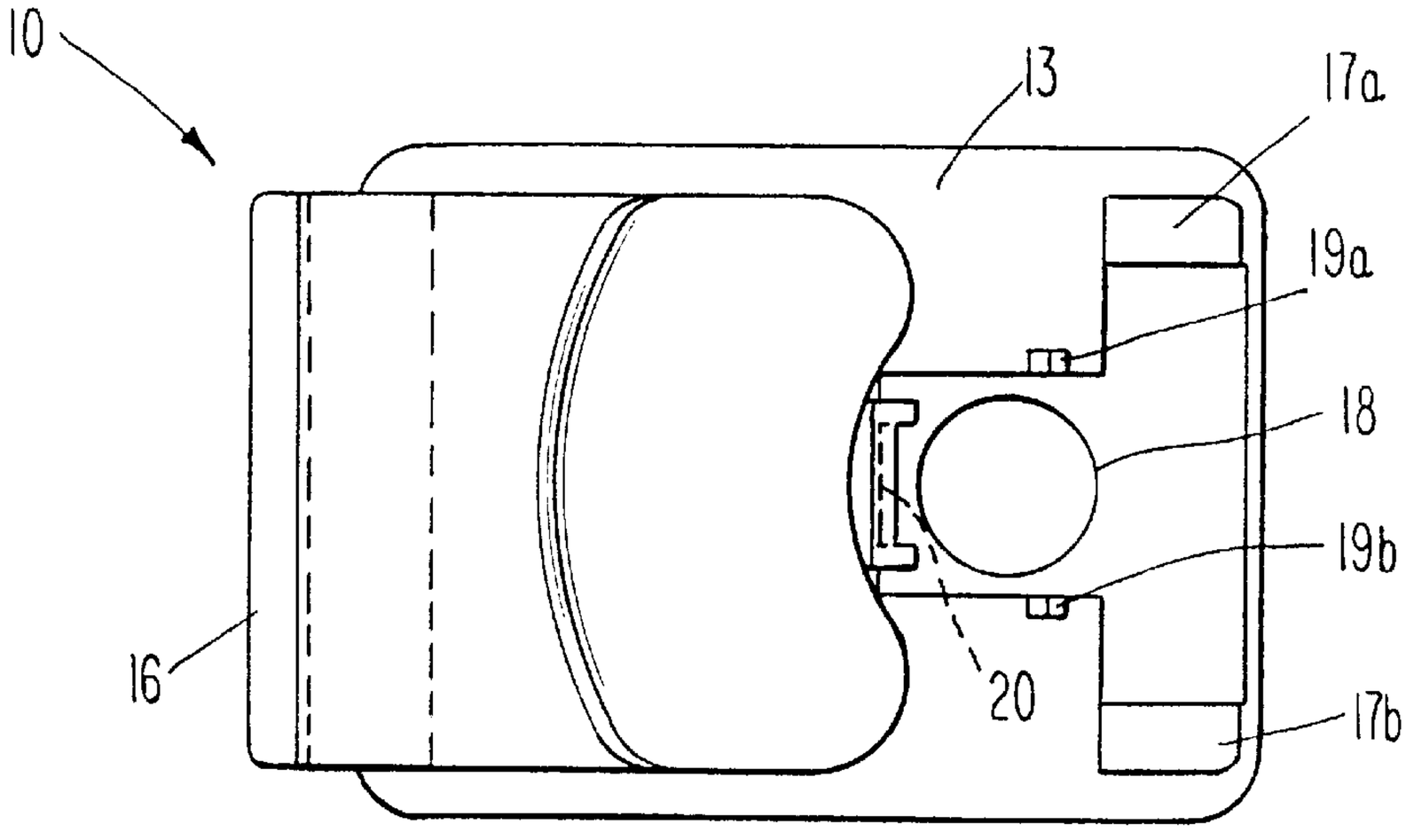



Fig. 2

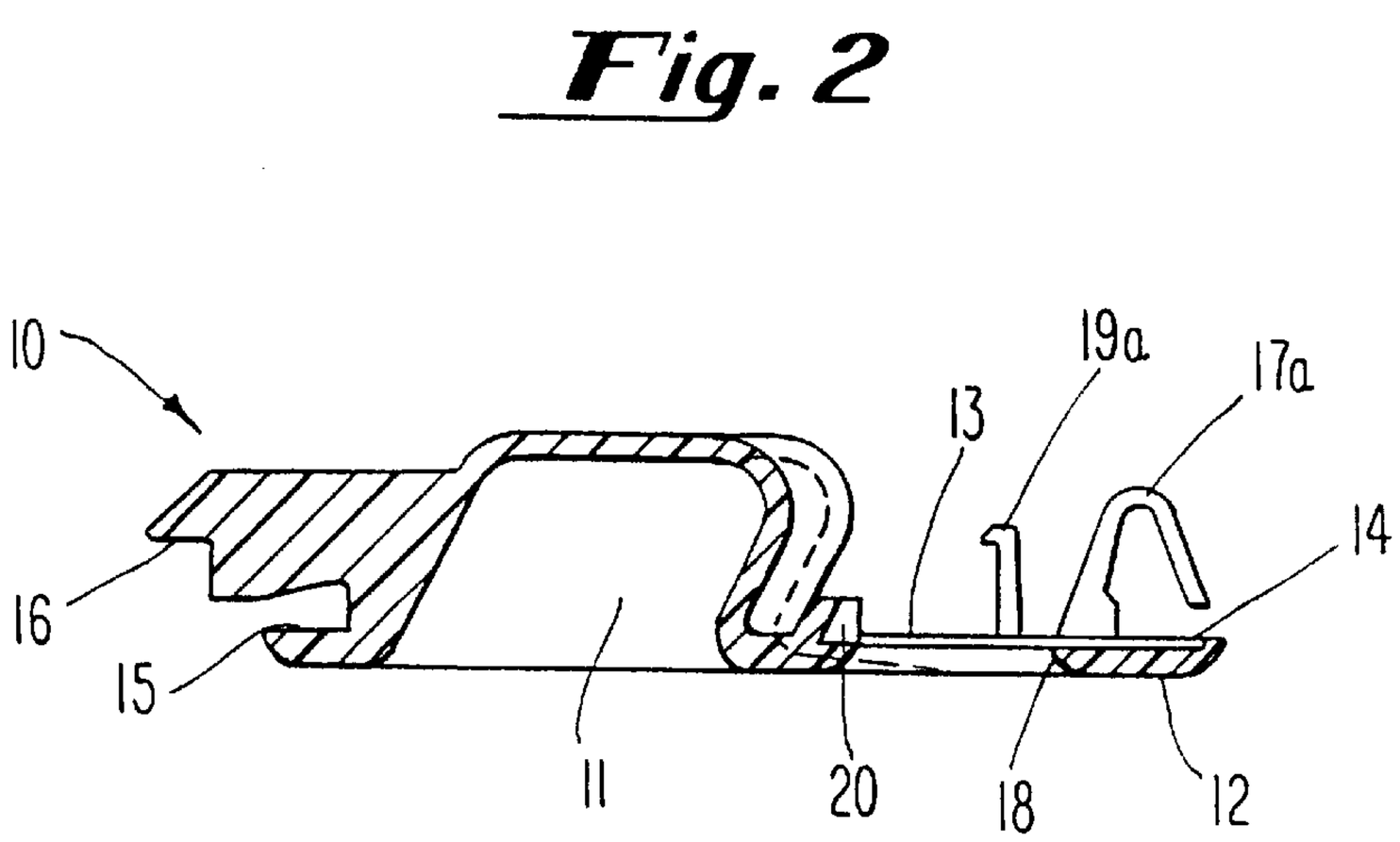



Fig. 3

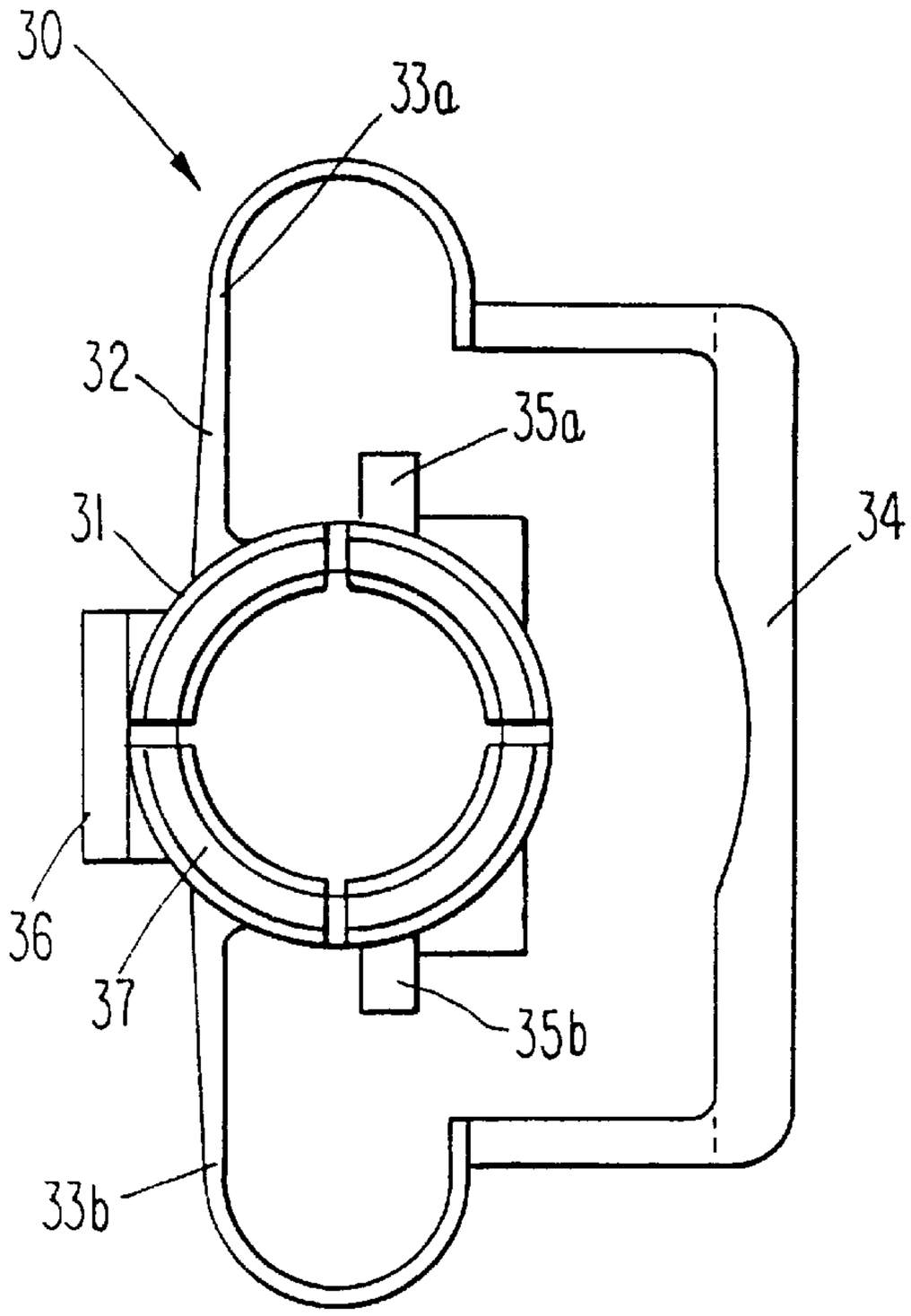



Fig. 4

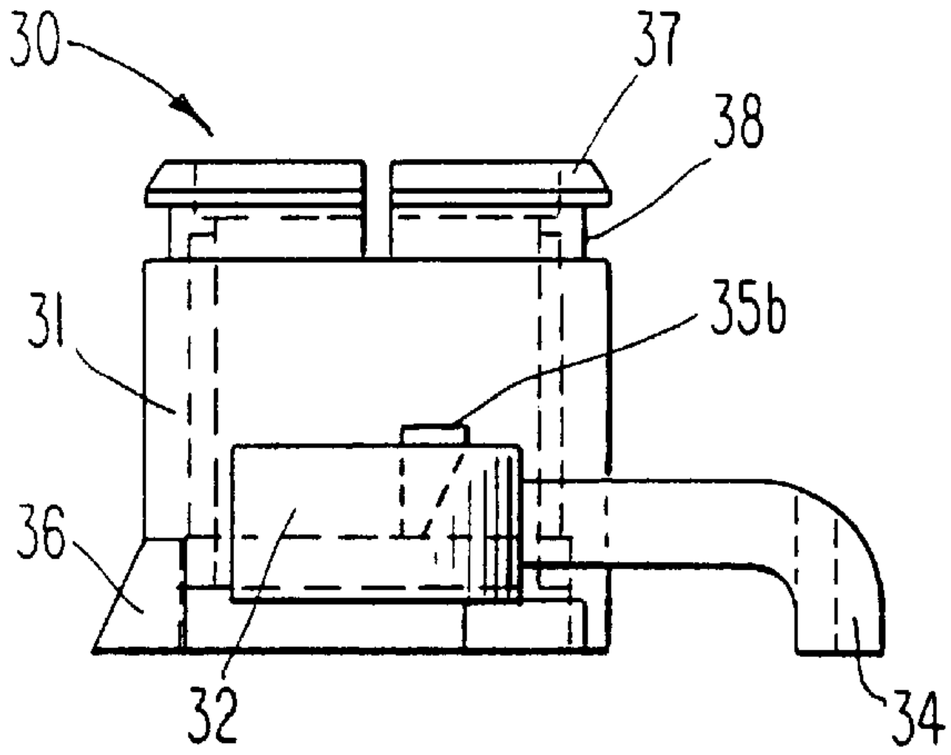



Fig. 5

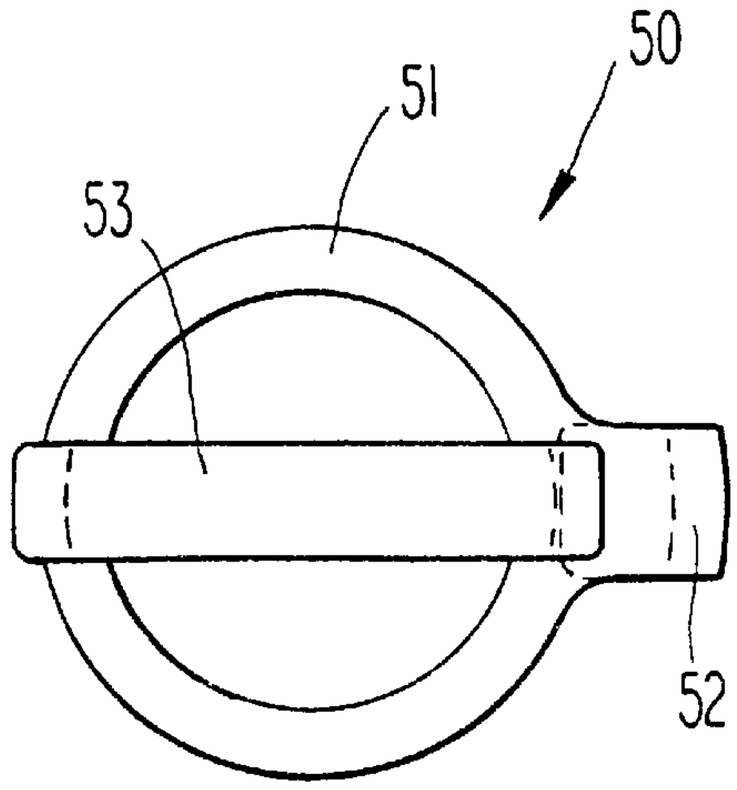



Fig. 6

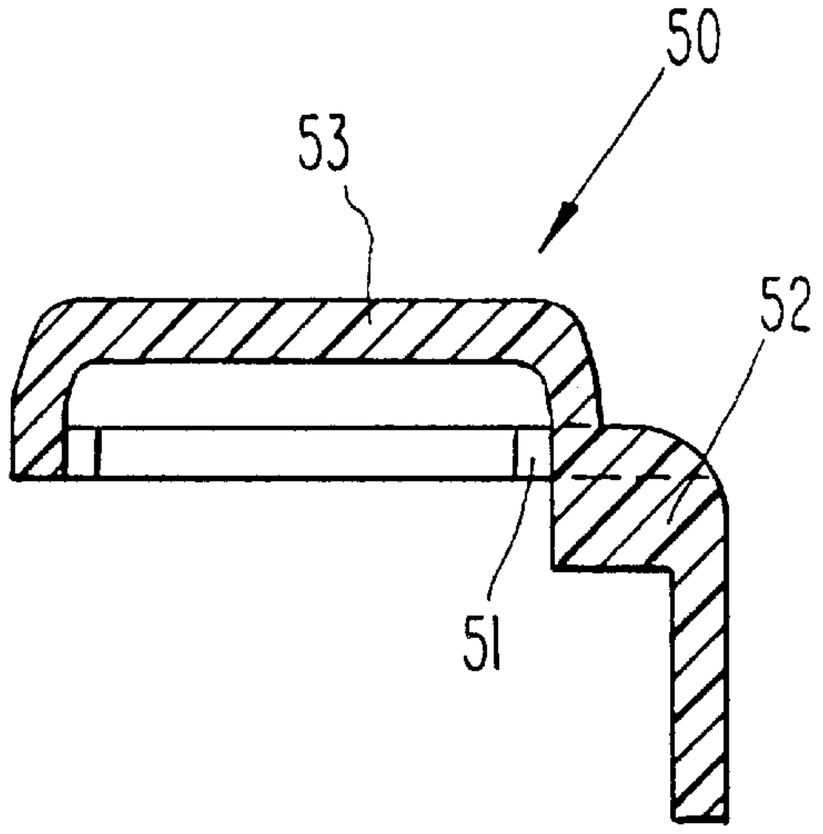



Fig. 7

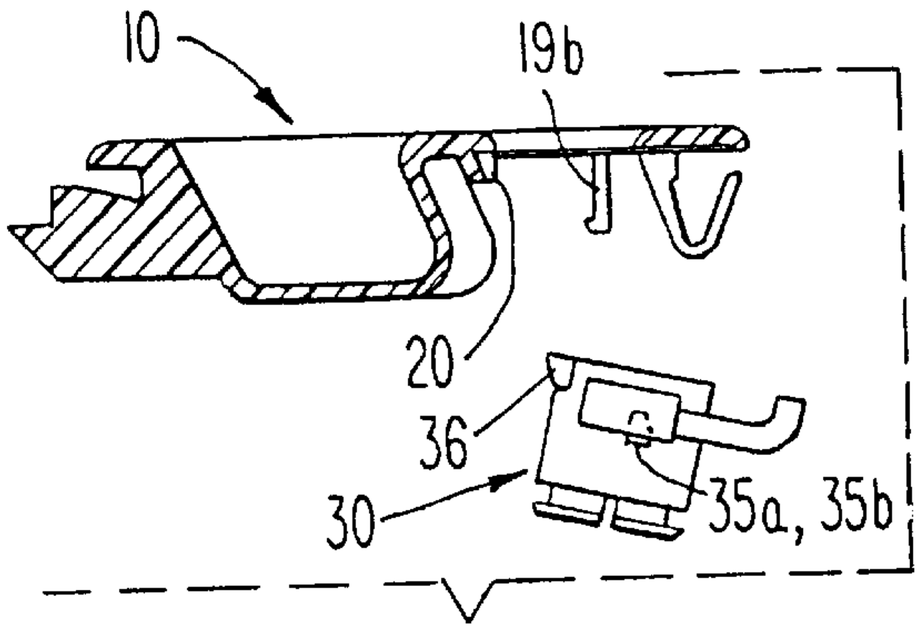



Fig. 8A

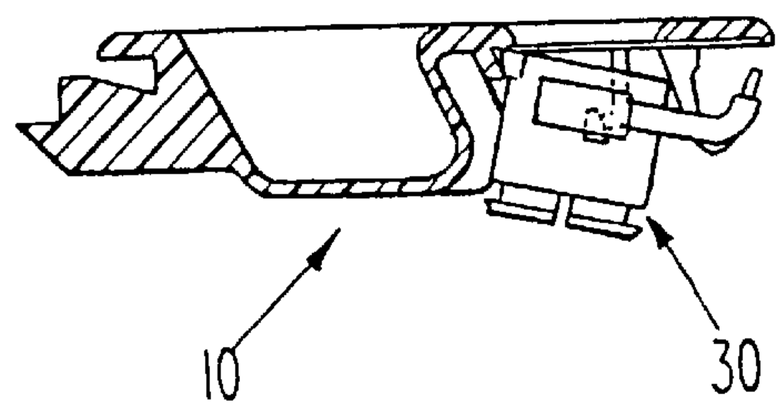



Fig. 8B

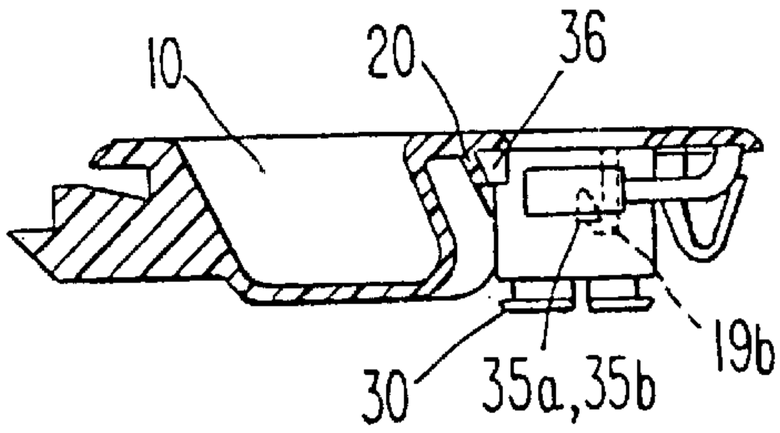



Fig. 8C

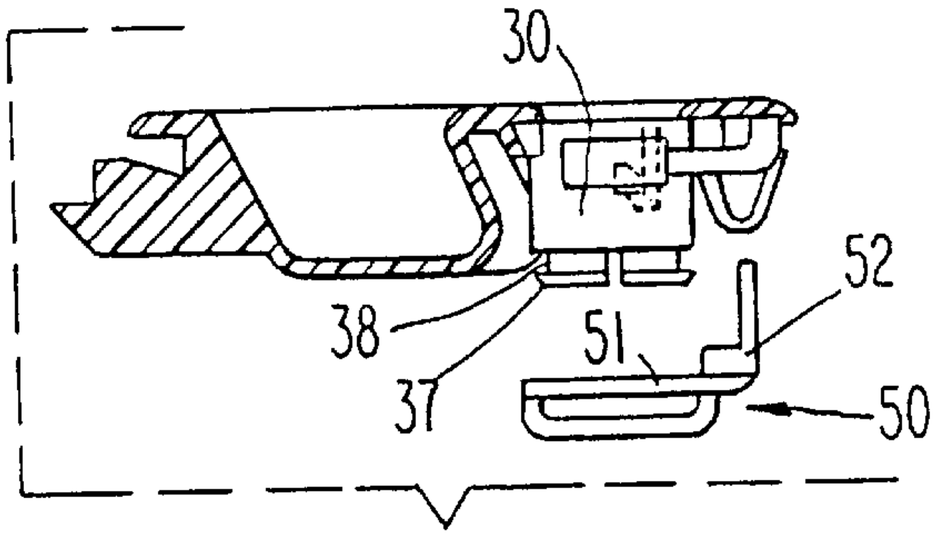



Fig. 8D

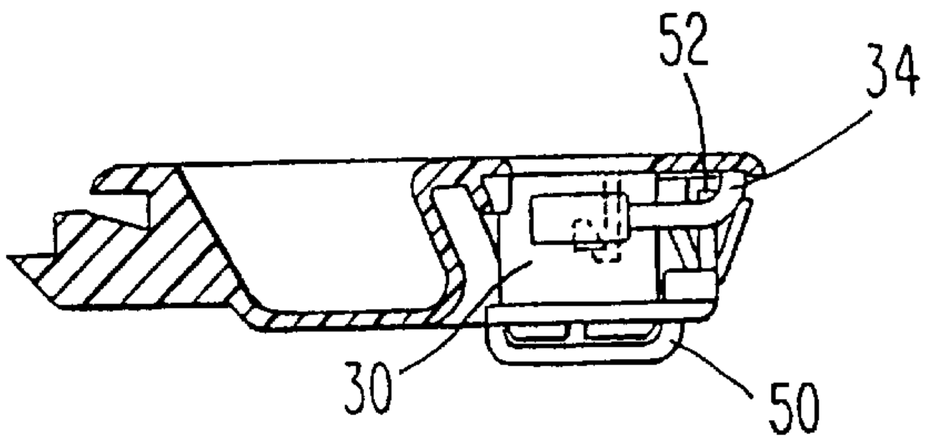



Fig. 8E

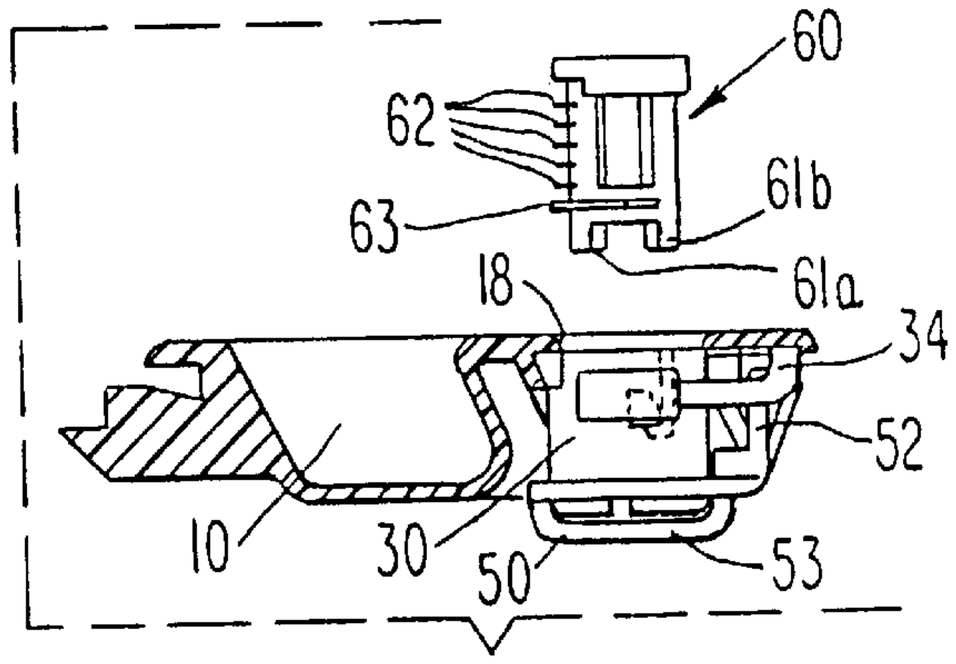



Fig. 8F

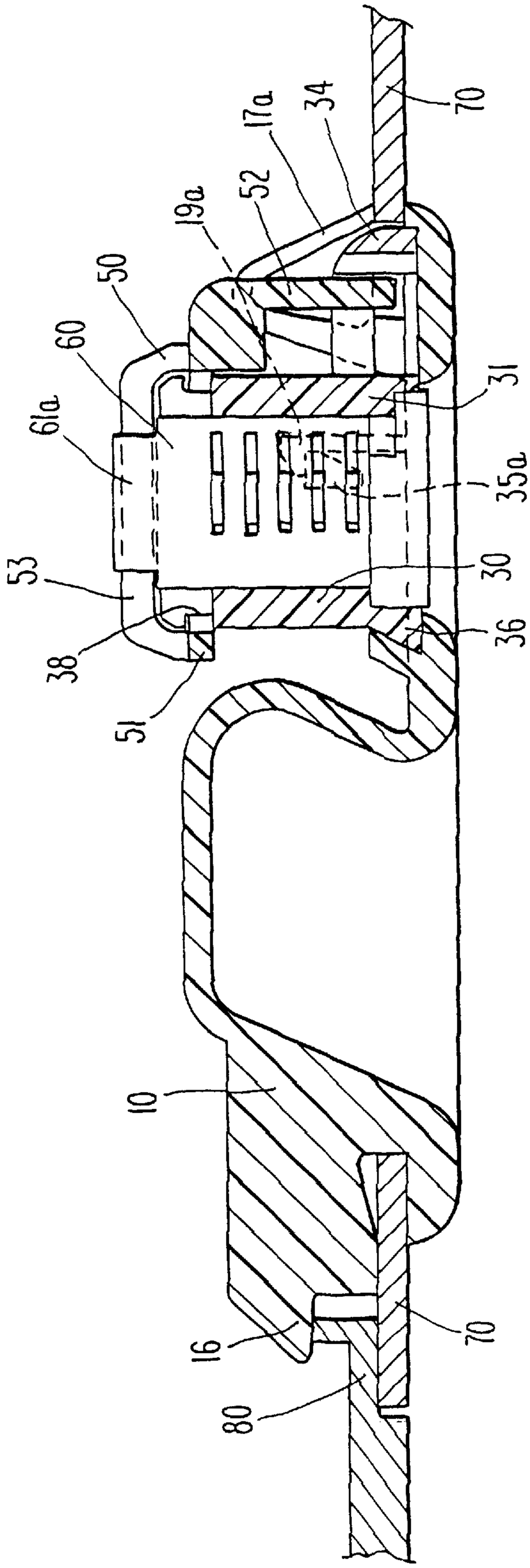



Fig. 9

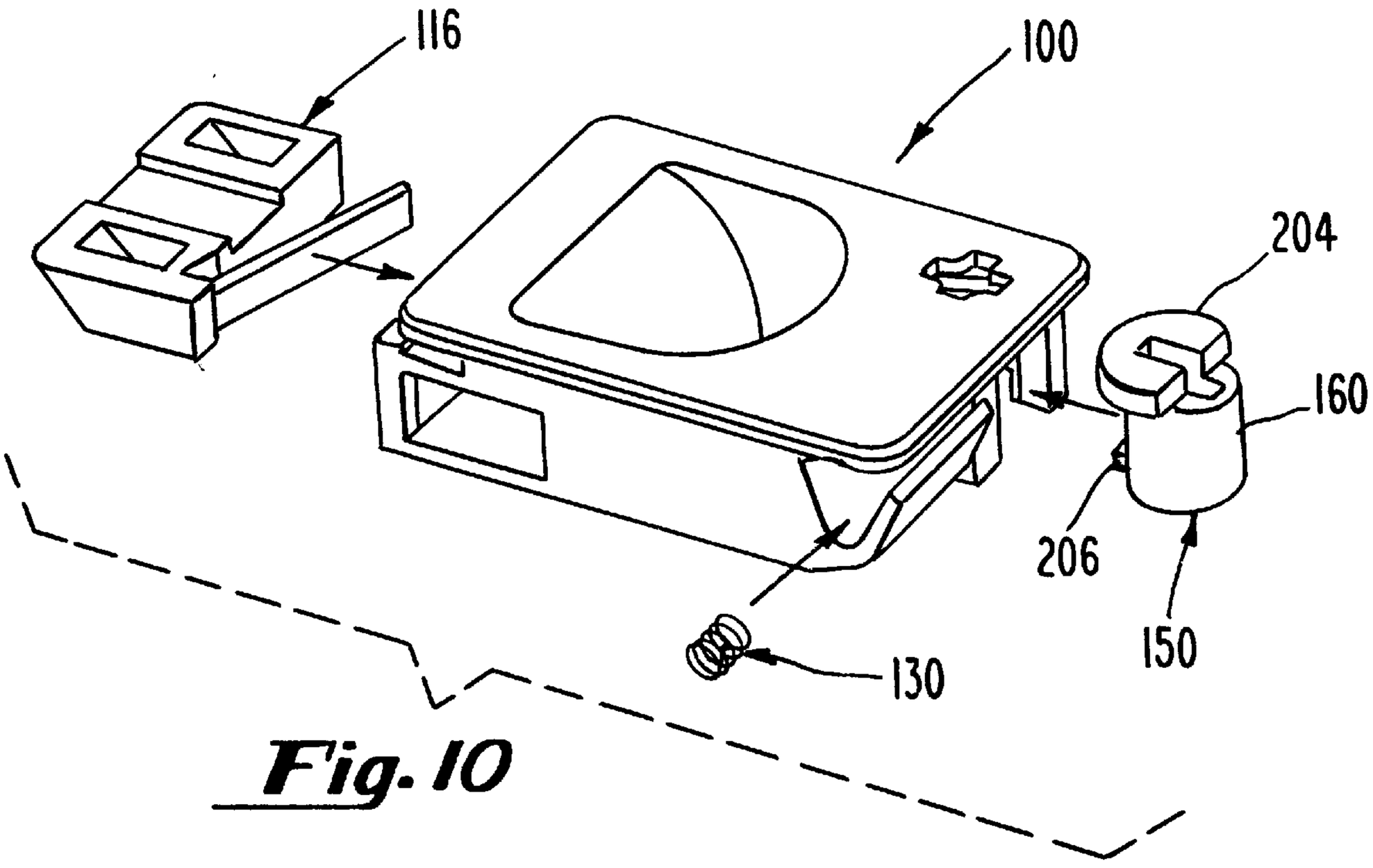



Fig. 10

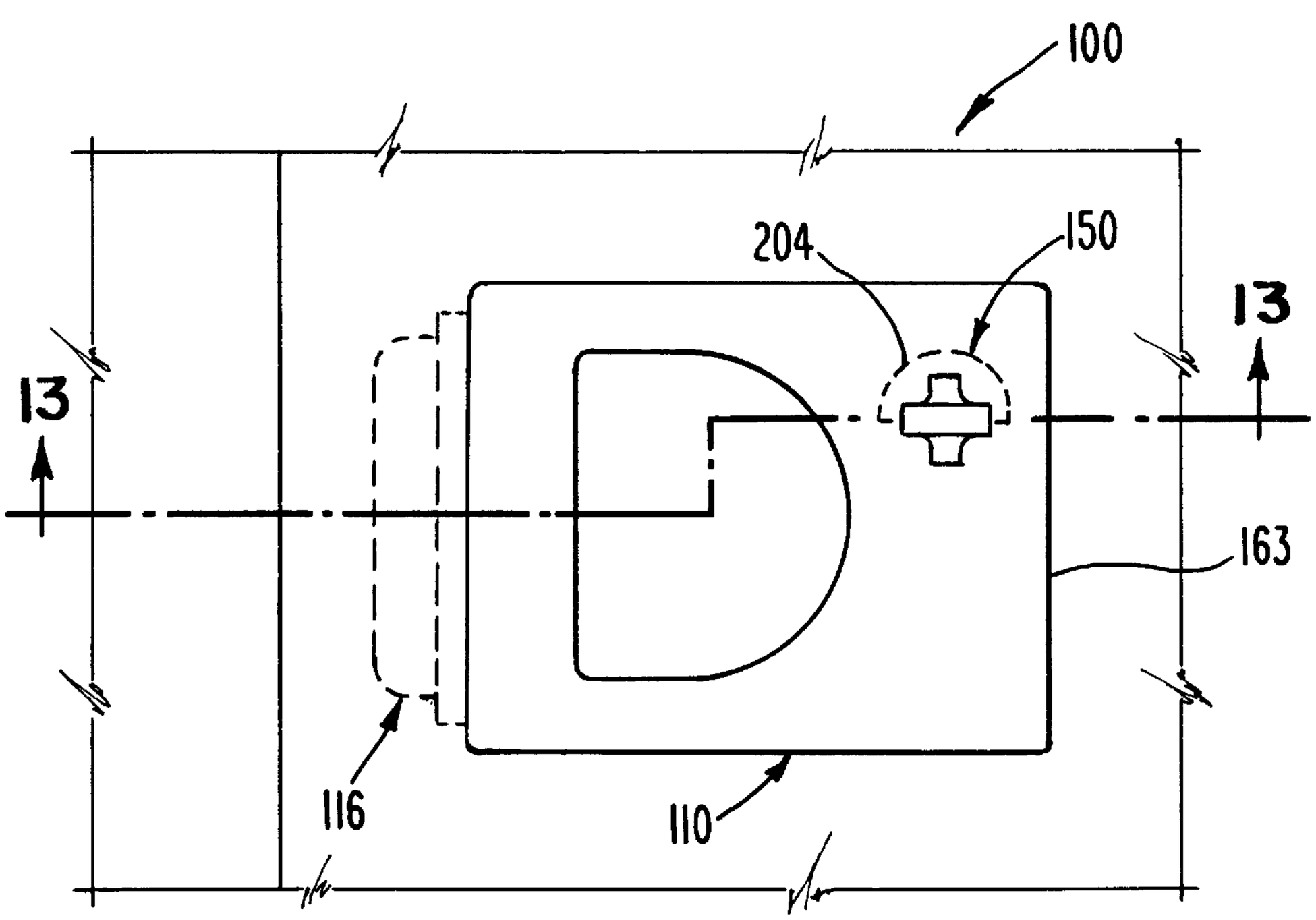



Fig. 11

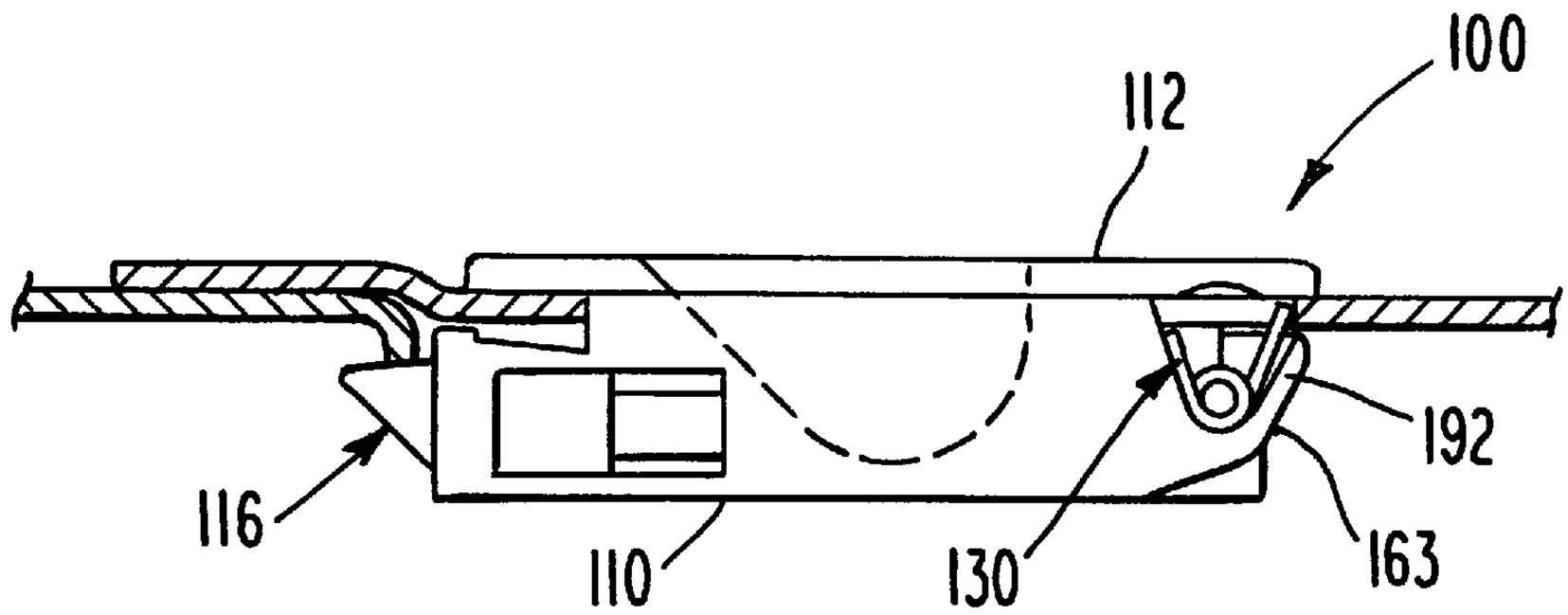



Fig. 12

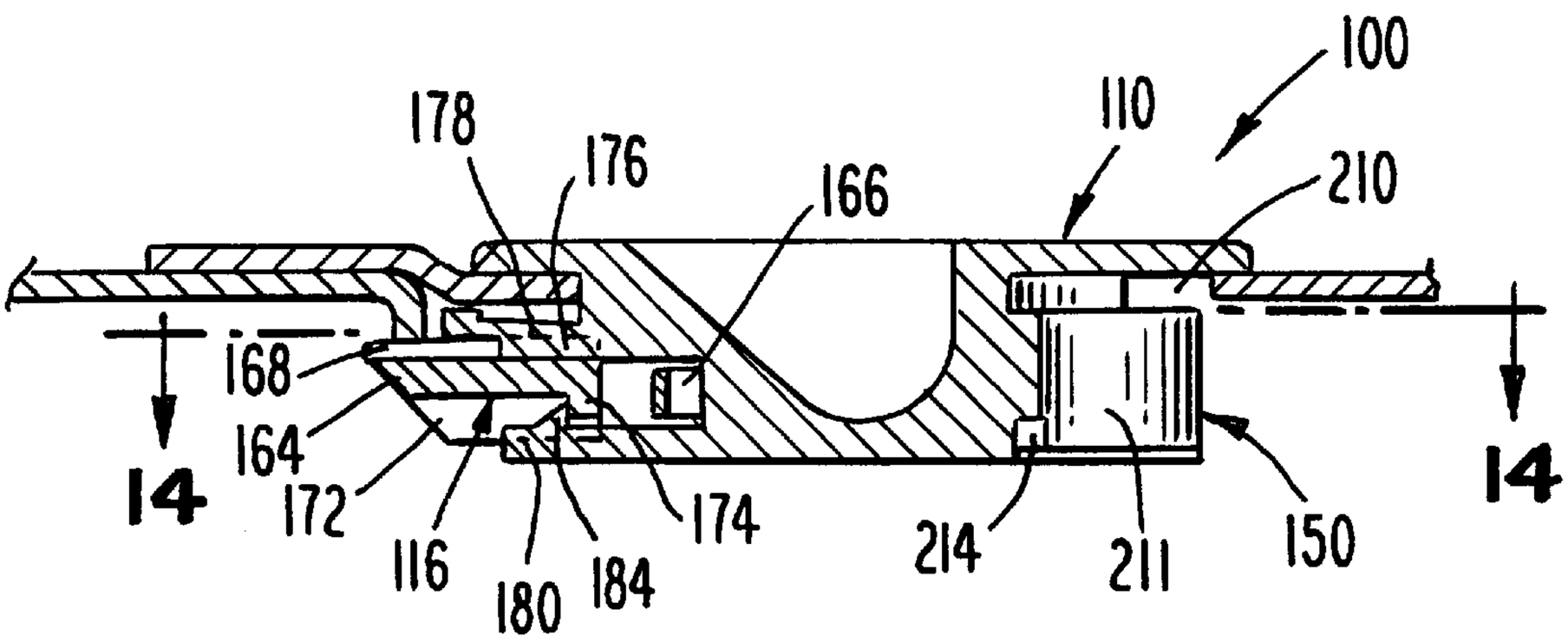



Fig. 13

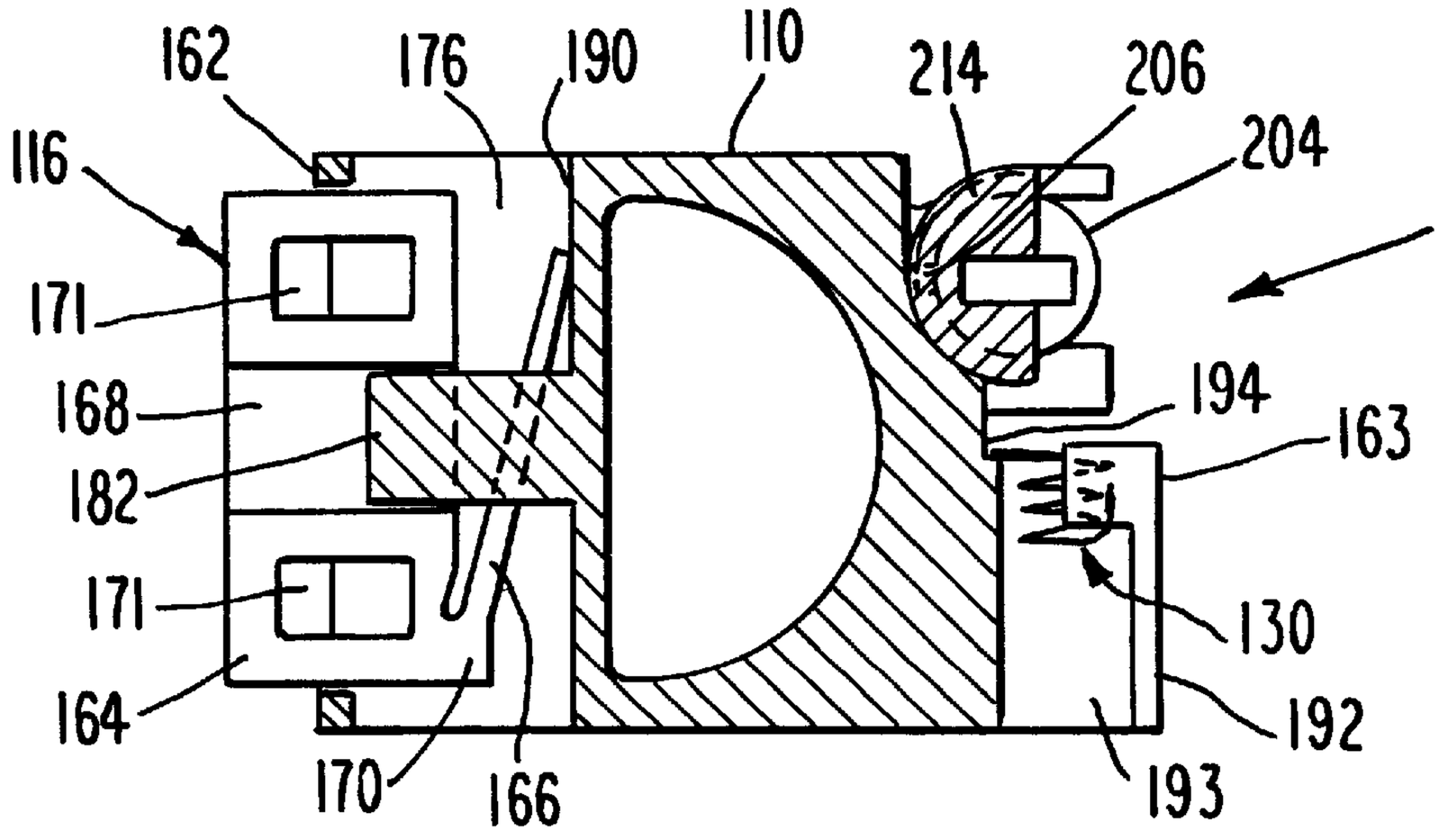



Fig. 14

# LOCKING SLIDE LATCH

## BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

1. Field of the Invention

The present invention relates to slide latches for doors, panels and the like. The latches incorporate a locking feature and are resistant to corrosion, making them useful in automotive, recreational vehicle, marine and other applications.

2. Brief Description of the Prior Art

Various types of slide latches are known. These latches are inserted in a cut-out opening of one panel and are slidable in the plane of the panel to engage a second panel or frame member. Conventional slide latches are typically non-locking and can be relatively complex to assemble and susceptible to corrosion.

U.S. Pat. Nos. 3,841,674 and 3,850,464 to Bisbing, et al., which are hereby incorporated by reference, disclose slide latches of one-piece or two-piece construction that do not include a locking feature.

The present invention has been developed in view of the foregoing, and to overcome the deficiencies of the prior art.

## SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

An object of the present invention is to provide a novel locking slide latch.

Another object of the present invention is to provide a slide latch comprising a gripable base member, spring means mounted on the base member and locking means rotatably mounted on the base member.

A further object of the present invention is to provide a slide latch comprising a gripable base member, a spring member mounted on the base member, a locking member rotatably mounted on the spring member and a lock plug in contact with the lock member.

Another object of the present invention is to provide a locking slide latch that comprises components that can be assembled together without the use of conventional fasteners such as screws and adhesives.

A further object of the present invention is to provide a locking slide latch that is resistant to corrosion.

Another object of the present invention is to provide a method of assembling a slide latch comprising the steps of mounting a spring member on a base member without the use of separate fasteners or adhesives, mounting a rotatable locking member on the spring member and mounting lock plug at least partially within the spring member and in contact with the locking member.

These and other objects of the present invention will become more readily apparent from the following description.

## BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

FIG. **1** is a top view of the body portion of a latch of the present invention.

FIG. **2** is a bottom view of the body portion of a latch of the present invention.

FIG. **3** is a sectional side view of the body portion of a latch of the present invention.

FIG. **4** is a top view of a spring member of the present invention.

FIG. **5** is a side view of a spring member of the present invention.



FIG. **6** is a top view of a locking member of the present invention.

FIG. **7** is a side sectional view of a locking member of the present invention.

FIGS. **8**A–F represent an assembly diagram of a latch of the present invention.

FIG. **9** is a sectional side view of an assembled latch of the present invention.

FIG. **10** is an exploded perspective view of a latch in accordance with another embodiment of the present invention.

FIG. **11** is a top plan view of the latch of FIG. **10**, shown in a mounted position.

FIG. **12** is a left side view of the latch of FIG. **10**.

FIG. **13** is a right side elevational view of the latch of FIG. **10**, taken along a line **12**—**12** of FIG. **11**.

FIG. **14** is a top plan view of the latch of FIG. **10** taken along the line **14**—**14** of FIG. **13**.

## DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE PREFERRED EMBODIMENT

The locking slide latch of the present invention comprises a body portion that serves as a handle, a spring member that serves to bias the body portion in a closed position when the latch is installed, and a locking member that is rotatable into a position that prevents opening of the latch. Referring to the drawings in detail, in which like reference numbers represent like elements throughout the several drawings, FIGS. **1–3** show the gripable base member **10** of a preferred latch of the present invention. The base member **10** includes a handle opening **11** that is adapted to be gripped by an operator for opening the latch. The base member **10** includes a front surface **12** and a back surface **13** that is adapted to slide against the panel in which the base member is installed. The base member **10** includes an engaging portion **16** adapted to engage a second panel or frame member (not shown) when the latch is in the closed position. The term "frame member" as used herein is defined broadly to include any structure, such as a frame or panel, that is capable of being fastened to the panel in which the slide latch of the present invention is installed. As shown most clearly in FIG. **3**, the base member includes end portions **14** and **15** that contact the panel in which the latch is installed (not shown). A pair of compliant clips **17***a* and **17***b* are located at one end of the base member and are adapted to secure the base member within the cut-out portion of the panel after the base member is snapped into place in the panel. The base member **10** includes a through-hole **18** extending from the front surface **12** to the back surface **13** that is adapted to receive a rotating lock plug, as more fully described below. On the back **13** of the base member, surrounding the through-hole **18**, are prongs **19***a* and **19***b* and angled recess **20** that serve to secure the spring member when the latch is assembled, as discussed below.

The base member **10** may be manufactured from any suitable material such as plastic or metal. ABS plastic is a particularly preferred material for the base member due to its durability, ease of fabrication, low cost and resistance to corrosion. Although the base member **10** is shown as a solid piece of material in the section view of FIG. **3**, it is preferred to provide hollow portions in the base member in order to save weight and material costs.

FIGS. **4** and **5** illustrate a preferred spring member **30** of the present invention. The spring member **30** comprises a generally cylindrical body portion **31** with a complaint

spring portion **32** extending therefrom. In the embodiment shown in FIGS. **4** and **5**, the compliant spring portion **32** includes flexible sections **33***a* and **33***b* that provide flexure for the spring **32** and serve to bias the base member of the latch in the closed position when the latch is installed. A relatively rigid portion **34** extends from the flexible sections **33***a* and **33***b* of the spring and is adapted to contact the cut-out portion of the panel in which the latch is installed. The spring **32** is shown in the relaxed position in FIGS. **4** and **5**. When force is applied from right to left on rigid member **34**, flexure occurs in the flexible sections **33***a* and **33***b*, allowing rigid member **34** to move toward the cylindrical body **31** of the spring member. Shoulder **35***a* and **35***b* and angled retention member **36** are located around the periphery of the cylindrical body **31**. When assembled, the shoulder members **35***a* and **35***b* engage the prongs **19***a* an **19***b* of the base member **10**, and the angled retention member **36** engages the angled recess **20** of the base member **10**. This engagement allows the spring member **30** to be snap-fit onto the base member **10** without the use of tools or conventional fastening means such as screws or adhesives.

In the preferred embodiment, the top of the cylindrical body portion **31** is divided into four quadrants **37** located at 90° intervals around the circumference of the cylinder. These divisions allow the quadrants to flex radially inward, thereby allowing a locking member to be snap-fit over the top of the cylinder **37**. As shown most clearly in FIG. **5**, a groove **38** of smaller radius is located below the top of the cylinder **37**. When assembled, the locking member of the latch is retained within the groove **38** and rotates therein.

The spring member **30** can be manufactured from any suitable material such as plastic or metal. It is preferred to use corrosion resistant materials in the manufacture of the spring member. Acetels are preferred plastic for the spring member, with delrin being particularly preferred due to their excellent elasticity and resistance to corrosion, fracture and fatigue. It is also preferred to use a plastic that exhibits only minor changes in mechanical properties over varying temperature ranges. For example, if a latch of the present invention is to be subjected to a range of temperatures, it is desirable to use a plastic for the spring member that possesses relatively constant elasticity over the temperature range. As shown in FIGS. **4** and **5**, the spring member **30** is preferably made from a single piece of material. However, various modifications can be made to the spring member, including the use of separate springs that are fastened to the cylindrical member **31**. Such separate springs may be made of any suitable material such as plastic or stainless steel.

FIGS. **6** and **7** illustrate a preferred locking member **50** of the present invention. The locking member **50** includes a ring **51** that is adapted to be press-fit over the top **37** of the spring member **30** an to rotate in the groove **38**. Extending radially outward and down from the ring member **51** is a locking finger **52** that is adapted to extend between the rigid member **34** and cylindrical base **31** of the spring member **30** when the locking member **50** is mounted on the spring member **30**. When assembled, the locking finger **52** may be rotated into a position against the rigid portion **34** of the spring member **30**, thereby preventing movement of the rigid portion **34** toward the cylindrical body portion **31**. The locking member **50** also includes a bar member **53** that extends across the diameter of the ring **51**. The bar member **53** is adapted to contact a rotating lock plug or other actuating mechanism, as more fully described below.

The locking member **50** may be manufactured from any suitable material that possesses sufficient strength, such as metal, plastic or composite material. A particularly preferred material for the locking member **50** is glass filled nylon due to its excellent strength and corrosion resistance. Although the presently preferred configuration of the locking member **50** is shown in FIGS. **6** and **7**, it should be recognized that the locking member may be provided in many different forms that allow locking of the latch when the locking member is rotated from an open to a closed position.

The preferred slide latch of the present invention also includes a lock plug that extends through the through-hole **18** of the base member **10** and contacts the locking member **50** in order to produce rotation thereof. This feature is shown most clearly in FIGS. **8**F and **9**. The lock plug **60** may be operated by a key. When the security of the key lock is not required, the lock plug **60** may be provided in the form of a generally cylindrical member that is freely rotatable by hand or by a tool actuator such as a hex wrench or screwdriver. The lock plug **60** includes protrusions **61***a* and **61***b* that are adapted to contact either side of the bar **53** of the locking member **50** when the latch is assembled. Rotation of the lock plug **60** causes rotation of the locking member **50** through contact between the protrusions **61***a* and **61***b* and the bar member **53**. In the preferred key-operated lock plug, as shone in FIG. **8**F, tumblers **62** are provided along one side of the plug. In addition, an E-ring **63** is provided on the lock plug **60** that is retractable in the radial direction in order to allow insertion of the lock plug **60** into the hollow cylindrical body portion **31** of the spring member **30**. Once seated within the cylindrical body **31**, the E-ring springs radially outward to secure the lock plug within the cylinder.

The components of the lock plug **60** are preferably manufactured from materials such as plastic and noncorrosive metal. In the presently preferred embodiment, the body of the lock plug **60** is manufactured from plastic, while the tumblers **62** and E-ring **63** are manufactured from brass. Such a lock plug is highly resistant to corrosion.

The method of assembling the preferred slide latch of the present invention is shown in FIGS. **8**A–G. In FIG. **8**A, the spring member **30** is oriented in relation to the base member **10** as shown. The angled recess **20** and prongs **19***a* and **19***b* are adapted to receive the angled retention member **36** and shoulders **35***a* and **35***b*, respectively. As shown in FIG. **8**B, the angled retention member **36** is first inserted in the angled recess **20**. In FIG. **8**C, the prongs **19***a* and **19***b*, are snapped over the shoulders **35***a* and **35***b* in order to mount the spring member **30** to the base member **10**. Such a snap-fit feature allows for ease of assembly without the need for tools or fasteners such as screws or adhesives. As an alternative, the spring member **30** may be fastened to the base member **10** by means of ultrasonic welding. In FIG. **8**D, the locking member **50** is oriented as shown for subsequent mounting on the spring member **30**. The ring **51** of the locking member **50** is snap-fit over the end **37** of the spring member **30** and is seated within the recessed groove **38**. As shown in FIG. **8**E, when the locking member **50** is mounted, the locking finger **52** may be disposed against the rigid member **34**, thereby preventing movement of the rigid member **34** toward the cylindrical base **31** of the spring member **30**. If the locking finger **52** is rotated away from contact with the rigid member **34**, the rigid member is allowed to move toward the cylindrical base **31** of the spring member **30** against the force of the compliant portion **32** of the spring. In FIG. **8**F, the lock plug **60** is oriented as shown with respect to the base member **10** and is then inserted through through-hole **18** and into the interior of the cylindrical body **31** of the spring member **30**.

Once fully inserted, as shown in FIG. **9**, the protrusions **61***a* and **61***b* of the lock plug **60** contact the sides of the bar

member **53** of the locking member **50**. Due to the contact between the protrusions **61***a* and **61***b* and the bar member **53**, rotation of the lock plug causes rotation of the locking member **50**. When the locking member **50** is in the orientation shown in FIG. **9** in which the locking finger **52** is against the rigid member **34**, the latch is in the locked position. When the locking finger **52** is rotated a sufficient amount in either direction, e.g. 90°, there is no contact between the locking finger **52** and rigid member **34**, thereby allowing the rigid member **34** to move toward the cylindrical base **31** of the spring member **30** when a sufficient force is applied thereto.

Once assembled in the manner shown in FIGS. **8**A–F, the locking slide latch of the present invention may be installed in a cut-out portion of a panel in a manner similar to conventional, non-locking slide latches. The installation of such conventional latches is described in U.S. Pat. Nos. 3,841,674 and 3,850,464, cited previously. A fully assembled and installed slide latch is shown in FIG. **9**. The base member **10** is located in a cut-out portion of a panel **70**. In the latched position shown in FIG. **9**, the engaging portion **16** of the base member **10** engages a frame member **80** to thereby releasably retain the panel **70** relative to the frame member **80**.

As can be seen from the assembly drawings of FIGS. **8**A–F, the slide latch of the present invention may be assembled simply without the use of tools. In addition, fastening means such as screws, rivets and adhesives used in conventional slide latches are not required during the assembly process. The use of the separate components for the base member **10**, spring member **30**, locking member **50** and lock plug **60** allows for many variations in the final latch, depending on the components selected. For example, the base member **10** may be provided in various dimensions to accommodate varying panel thicknesses. In this manner, the present latch may be altered to fit panels with thicknesses of less than 1 to greater than 10 mm. It is particularly preferred to provide the present slide latches in sizes that fit panels with thickness of from about 1.6 to about 6.5 mm. In addition, the end portion **16** of the member **10** may be altered to accommodate varying frame member sizes. Furthermore, the components of the present slide latches may be adjusted to provide variable grip ranges. Therefore, the slide latches of the present invention are adaptable to many varying applications and can be assembled to meet varying design criteria. Another advantage of the present slide latches is that they can be assembled without separate fasteners or adhesives and can easily be installed in a panel.

The locking mechanism provided on the slide latches of the present invention provides several advantages over conventional slide latches. Typically, slide latches are not provided with a locking feature. When it is desired to lock a conventional slide latch, a separate locking mechanism is usually provided on the panel adjacent to the latch. The slide latches of the present invention incorporate a locking mechanism directly therein, thereby providing simplified installation.

A major advantage of the preferred slide latches of the present invention is their resistance to corrosion. The latches are preferably manufactured from corrosion resistant materials such as plastics, thereby allowing for use in automotive, recreational vehicle and marine applications, where exposure to moisture and other corrosive elements is frequently encountered.

In FIGS. **10** to **14** is shown a locking slide latch in accordance with another preferred embodiment of the present invention. For the sake of clarity, the portions of the locking slide latch in accordance with the present embodiment which correspond to the portions described in relation to the locking slide latch earlier described and shown in FIGS. **1–9** will be described using the same number designations. The locking slide latch **100** similar to the locking slide latch earlier described also comprises, as portions thereof, a body portion, a spring member and a locking member. As will be described in more detail hereinafter, the primary differences in the locking slide latch **100** from that earlier described are the engaging portion **116**, spring **130** and locking member **150**.

The base member **110** in this embodiment as shown in FIG. **14** includes a separate, independently operating engaging portion or pawl **116**. The base member **110** includes a cavity **176** provided within a forward surface **162** into which the engaging portion **116** is received. The engaging portion **116** in this embodiment comprises a body **164** generally rectangular in configuration and biasing means attached with the body **164**, which in this embodiment comprises a leg **166**. The leg **166** in accordance with the present embodiment is generally elongated and attached at one end to the body **164**, and with its terminating end being at spaced separation from the body **164**. The leg **166** is sufficiently flexible in operation as will be described in further detail below. The body **164** of the engaging portion **116** includes a slot **168**, generally rectangular in this embodiment, provided within its upper surface. In addition, a boss **170**, generally square in configuration, is attached to a front surface of the body **164** to which the leg **166** is attached. Further, provided within the upper surface of the body **164** is two cavities **171**, generally rectangular in shape, and positioned proximate terminating ends. Also, as best seen in FIG. **13**, provided within the lower surface of the body **164**, and opposing the slot **168** is a slot **172**. The difference in this slot **172** from the slot **168** is that the slot **172** does not extend the entire width of the body **164**, but rather terminates by an end wall **174** which is proximate the front surface of the body **164**, for the purpose described below. The engaging portion **116** may be manufactured from any suitable material; one example is plastic such as polycarbonate.

The base member **110** as shown in FIGS. **13** and **14** includes the cavity **176**, generally rectangular in configuration, into which the engaging portion **116** is received. The cavity **176** is defined by an upper surface **178** and a lower surface **180**. In this embodiment, an upper boss **182** is attached to the upper surface **178** and a lower boss **184** is attached to the lower surface **180**. The upper boss **182** in this embodiment is generally rectangular in shape and positioned so as to be received into the slot **168** provided within the upper surface of the engaging portion **116**. The lower boss **184** in this embodiment includes a generally ramped camming wall and a locking wall substantially perpendicular to the lower surface **180** which operates to retain the engaging portion **116**. Specifically, upon assembly the engaging portion **116** is positioned so that the leg **166** is first received within the cavity **176** in the base member **110**. The slot **168** is received onto the upper boss **182**, and the end wall **174** first engages the camming surface of the lower boss **184**, and when mounted the end wall **174** is adapted to engage the locking surface of the lower boss **184** to prevent the engaging portion **116** from separating from its position within the base member **110**. In the assembled position, the leg **166** of the engaging portion **116** engages a rear surface **190** defined by the cavity **176**. Specifically, as the engaging portion **116** in operation engages a second panel or frame member, the engaging portion **116** will be moved from an

extended position in an inward direction toward the base member **110** to a retracted position due to the flexing action of the leg **166**. Similarly, the resiliency of the leg **166** operates to return the engaging portion **11 6** toward its original position and to the extended position when not engaging the second panel or frame member, such as when the lock is in an open position.

The spring member **130** in this embodiment as best seen in FIGS. **10**, **12** and **14** comprises a torsion spring, preferably of metal, and received within the base member **110** proximate its rear surface **163**. Specifically, the body member **110** in this embodiment includes a lip **192**, which extends approximately half the length of its rear surface **163**, and which defines a channel **193**, generally V-shaped, into which the spring member **130** is received. In this embodiment, one leg of the torsion spring is positioned within the gap between the lip **192** and surface **112** of the base member **110** and the second leg of the torsion spring is received within a groove **194** provided within the base member **110** proximate the channel **193**.

The locking member **150** in this embodiment as best seen in FIGS. **10**, **13** and **14** comprises a boss **204** connected with the lock plug **160**. In the present embodiment, the boss **204** is generally semi-circular in shape and attached at one end to the lock plug **160**. In addition, a retaining boss **206** is attached to the locked plug **160** at the end opposite the boss **204**, the purpose of which will be described hereafter.

The body member **110** is adapted to receive the lock plug **160** for rotation of the locking member **150** corresponding with rotation of the lock plug **160**. In this embodiment, the base member **110** is provided with an upper cavity **210** into which the boss **204** is received, a central cavity **211** into which the cylindrical body of the lock plug **160** is received, and a channel **214**, which in this embodiment is approximately 45° in length into which the retaining boss **206** is received. Specifically, the end walls of the channel **214** operate to limit the rotation of the lock plug **160** due to its engagement with the retaining boss **206**. In operation of the present embodiment, when in a locked position, the lock plug **160** is moved so that the boss **204** of the locking member **150** is positioned with part of its radiused portion positioned proximate the rear surface **163** of the base member **110**, and in this position is adapted to abut the panel surface formed by the cut-out portion when the base member **110** is slid relative to the panel, such as shown in dotted lines in FIG. **11**. In an open position, the lock plug **160** is in a position so that the planar portion of the boss **204** of the locking member **150** is positioned adjacent the rear surface **163** of the base member **110**, so that the base member **110** can be slid relative to the panel in which the latch is mounted, such as shown in FIG. **10**. In this embodiment, the length of the channel **214** is such that when the locking member **150** is in its open position, the detent boss **206** is positioned against one end wall of the channel **214**, and when the locking member **150** is in its closed position the detent boss **206** is positioned against the opposite end wall of the channel **214**. The combination locking member and lock plug in this embodiment can be manufactured from any suitable material, one example is plastic such as ABS.

The remaining structure and operation of the lockable slide latch **100** is the same as that described earlier in the application and shown in FIGS. **1–9**, and for the sake of brevity will not be further described herein.

While the present invention is described in terms of the preferred embodiment, many modifications and variations are possible. Fore example, various spring configurations may be used in place of the disclosed spring member. Furthermore, the function of the spring member and the rotating locking member may be combined through the use of a unitary rotating member that, in one orientation, acts as a spring to bias the latch in the closed position and, in another orientation, acts as a locking member to prevent movement of the latch.

Accordingly, it is understood that the above description of the present invention is susceptible to considerable modifications, changes and adaptations by those skilled in the art, and that such modifications, changes and adaptations are intended to be considered within the scope of the present invention, which is set forth by the appended claims.

We claim:

**1**. A slide latch comprising:

a) a base member having means for installation in an aperture in a panel and for sliding relative to said panel to releasably retain said panel relative to a frame member, said base member having at least a first portion and a second portion wherein said first portion defines an upper surface terminating by a flange having top and bottom portions, and on installation said second portion is received within and extends through said panel aperture and said bottom portion of said flange is positioned adjacent an upper surface of said panel proximate said aperture thereof;

b) spring means mounted on said base member for biasing said base member toward engagement with said frame member; and

c) locking means rotatably mounted on said base member, wherein said base member having said locking means mounted thereon is installed in said panel aperture, with said locking means being rotatable into at least one position that substantially prevents said base member from sliding relative to said panel to thereby maintain the latch in a fastened position.

**2**. The slide latch according claim **1**, wherein said base member and said spring means comprise means for attaching said spring means to said base member without the use of separate fasteners or adhesives and independent of connection to said panel and frame.

**3**. The slide latch according to claim **1**, wherein said spring means is snap-fit on said base member.

**4**. The slide latch according to claim **1**, wherein said locking means comprises a rotatable lock plug in contact with a rotatable locking member.

**5**. The slide latch according to claim **1**, wherein said locking means in a first position is rotated to contact said spring means to substantially prevent said base member from sliding relative to said panel.

**6**. The slide latch according to claim **5**, wherein said locking means is adapted to rotate into a second position in which said locking means does not contact said spring means to allow said base member to slide relative to said panel.

**7**. The slide latch according to claim **1**, wherein said locking means in a first position is rotated so that the locking means is adapted to engage the panel to substantially prevent said base member from sliding relative to the panel.

**8**. The slide latch according to claim **7**, wherein said locking means is adapted to rotate into a second position in which said locking means does not at least initially contact said panel to allow said base member to slide relative to said panel.

**9**. The slide latch according to claim **1**, wherein said base member includes an opening and a biased pawl within said opening.

10. The slide latch according to claim 9, further comprising means for retaining said biased pawl within said opening of said base member.

11. A slide latch adapted for a panel and for latching said panel to a frame, said slide latch comprising:

a) a base member adapted for installation on said panel and for sliding relative to said panel to releasably retain said panel relative to a frame member;

b) a biased pawl mounted on said base member for movement between an extended position and a retracted position relative to said base member;

c) a spring member mounted on said base member;

d) a rotatable lock plug mounted on said base member and having a locking member, wherein upon installation of said base member with said panel, rotation of said lock plug causes rotation of said locking member between a locked position, that substantially prevents said base member from sliding relative to said panel, and an unlocked position in which said base member is slidable relative to said panel.

12. A slide latch according to claim 11, wherein said biased pawl is movable between the retracted position and the extended position when the locking member is in the locked position and the unlocked position, whereby as said panel and said frame are being latched together when said locking member is in said locked position and said unlocked position, said pawl comes into contact with said frame which moves said pawl from the extended position toward said retracted position, with said pawl moving back toward said extended position when said panel and frame are attached together.

13. A slide latch according to claim 12, further comprising means between the biased pawl and base member for retaining the biased pawl in a mounted position on said base member.

14. A slide latch according to claim 13, wherein said biased pawl incudes a body and a generally resilient leg extending from said body and engaging said base member.

15. A slide latch according to claim 11, wherein said spring member comprises a torsion spring.

16. A slide assembly according to claim 12, wherein said base member defines an upper surface terminating by a flange and front and back portions, with said front portion having a cavity therein defining an inner surface into which said biased pawl is received for mounting.

17. A slide assembly according to claim 16, wherein said back portion of said base member includes a cavity therein for receiving said lock plug for mounting, wherein said locking member is positioned adjacent said panel in said locked position and said locking member is positioned at spaced separation from said panel when in said unlocked position.

18. A slide assembly according to claim 17, wherein said lock plug includes a boss at an upper end defining said locking member, with said boss being positioned adjacent a bottom portion of said flange of said base member, with said base member further including a through opening in said flange adjacent to said boss of said lock plug for rotating said locking member.

19. A slide assembly according to claim 13, wherein said retaining means comprises at least one generally flexible tab and a cavity receiving said at least one generally flexible tab between said inner surface of said base member and said biased pawl.

20. A slide assembly according to claim 19, where said biased pawl includes front and back ends and opposing upper and lower surfaces, wherein said upper surface includes a channel therein extending between said front and back ends, and said lower surface includes said cavity therein extending from said front end and terminating by a wall positioned proximate said back end, wherein said base member includes a boss extending from said inner surface of said cavity substantially opposing said at least one generally flexible tab, wherein said boss is received within said channel of said biased pawl and said at least one generally flexible tab is passed over said wall of said biased pawl and positioned within said cavity of said biased pawl.

21. A slide latch according to claim 11, wherein said base member further includes means for installation in an aperture within said panel.

22. A slide latch according to claim 18, further comprising limit means between said lock plug and said base member for controlling an amount of rotation of said lock plug between defined limits.

23. A slide latch according to claim 22, wherein said limit means comprises a guide member connected with said lock plug at a lower end distal said boss, with said guide member received within a channel in said base member, said channel having at least opposing end walls.

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